



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The President

Strasbourg, 21 January 2016

Dear INGO representative,

The Session of the Conference of INGOs is fast approaching and together we will open a new working year. As you can see in the activity report, 2015 has been a year rich in activities.

We begin this year with highly political and strategic debates, not only for you but also for your national members. At the meeting of the Conference, the **Permanent Representatives of the member States** of the Council of Europe will hold an exchange of views with the INGOs on strengthening the role of NGOs at the Council of Europe (Friday 29 January at 10am).

The **Secretary General of the Council of Europe** will have an exchange of views with the INGOs on the same day at 11am.

We will also have the pleasure of welcoming **NGOs from the Republic of Moldova and from Bulgaria** to discuss **NGO participation in decision-making**, which was the main theme of the two country visits of the Conference of INGOs.

The Education and Culture Committee has chosen **digital media** as its key theme for its meeting. Rui Gomes from the Council of Europe will present the **No Hate Speech Movement**. The Human Rights Committee will discuss **the fight against racism and intolerance** with the participation of Miléna Santerini, Co-ordinator of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance. The impact of emerging technologies and human rights will be debated with Laurence Lwoff, Head of the Bioethics Unit of the Council of Europe.

The Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee will lead the debate on **migration**, a cross-cutting theme of the Conference linked to [the open letter from the President of the Conference of INGOs to the Committee of Ministers](#). The results of the three side events organised by the Committee during the COP 21 Conference will also be on the agenda.

All this in a friendly atmosphere of exchange and dialogue, as only by working together can we change the world! The values of the Council of Europe and Human Rights need to be defended and protected.

I count on seeing you next week, especially at the plenary meeting on Friday 29 January.

Yours sincerely,

Anna RURKA